



Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association

Notes from the President

We had a great meeting in March and I'm really excited about our next few months. We'll be covering emergency preparedness, having game nights and keeping up with the budget. This will be my last month as President so I'm going to take advantage of this last chance to talk you into attending meetings and getting involved.

Sherman Oaks area is a great place to live. We are close to the freeways, our crime rate is down and we are developing community ties. We need a lot of things, however, like grocery stores and coffee shops and services. The city has neglected our area for decades and is now in the process of applying for grants to "improve" Bascom and Southwest. You can read this as increasing population and density. What you can't read out of this is any commitment to making sure our community has the services and amenities we deserve...and that we pay for! For this we are going to need your help because we (as a few board members) can't do this on our own.

You can begin by sounding off about the budget cuts that will (as proposed) keep the Bascom Community Center and Library closed even when construction is done. We have patiently waited year after year, being told that once constructed we would receive the same "benefits" as everyone else. During that time our members have cleaned up streets, wiped out graffiti and enhanced our neighborhoods. We kept our end of the bargain. If life were fair, we would demand that our facility be opened for years while others are shut down to balance out the fact we paid our dues for the last 10 years and received nothing. Instead, SONA residents are simply asking for parity; asking that we get the same as everyone else. If that means all facilities are open 1 day a week, so be it; it's one day more than we get now and more fair than the current proposal.

Don't be swayed by the "if we open your center we have to cut police and fire" argument. It's not us and it's not "our" facilities creating the budget problem and we shouldn't apologize for asking for what we paid for. You wouldn't expect to pay for a pound of apples and only get a slice of apple while everyone else gets two pounds for the same money. Everyone should be taking the same amount of cuts to services, we shouldn't be told that others deserve their facilities yet we don't. Fair is fair.

Our councilmember has stated he's willing to make the tough decisions that our elected officials get paid for. It's up to you to tell him and other council members what you want; it's up to them to figure out how without pitting neighbors against neighbors. I've left you a list of contacts and meeting times. Call, email, write letters or attend meetings. It costs you nothing and you have nothing to lose.

It took very few of us to win our battles with City College. It's going to take all of us to win this one. It's your money that has been spent building facilities and providing services for other communities. Your money will continue to be spent. Wouldn't you like to see some of the benefits?

It's been a pleasure serving you...see you at the meetings...Randi

SONA General Meeting April 8, 2009

6:30 PM Coffee and Snacks

**Catch up with your
Neighbors**

7:00 PM

**Election of Board
(see page 2)**

SJPD if Available

Budget Update

Emergency Prep Phase 1

Marlene Bird

(see article page 2)

8:30PM Adjourn

Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at the Sherman Oaks Community Center, 1800A Fruitdale Ave. SJ CA 95128

Our Board of Directors meets the third Tuesday of the month at 6:30pm in the same room.

Emergency Preparedness

SONA residents listed disaster preparedness as a priority this year and each month it seems we have a new reminder as to why this is so important. We watch incidents around our state and the world and each time we say "I should get my act together" yet, how many of you have done so? In a disaster, your preparation could make the difference between life and death.

We know we should be prepared, we promise ourselves we'll do it, but preparation can seem like an overwhelming thing; lists to make, cars to stock, home supplies to store. It can seem like a difficult journey. Where do you start? Well, if you're smart, you'll start at the next SONA meeting because Board member Marlene Bird has been doing a lot of the work for you by contacting the Red Cross, FEMA and other groups to get the information and recommendations for all of us. She has obtained brochures, combined lists and has organized an overwhelming amount of information in a manner that will be easy for you to use. She has compiled this information into an easy to use household binder that will allow you to take step by step actions.

These binders will be available for each household at our SONA meetings. We will go through different chapters in the binder each month. Each chapter deals with a different step in preparing your household. Each month you will be able to address a couple of new preparedness projects rather than trying to deal with the entire process all at once.

This will allow you to attack the preparedness issue in a thoughtful and comprehensive manner. Each month we will address different aspect of preparing for emergencies or natural disaster. You will be given supplies such as medical history forms, emergency contact information, HiFive contact cards, etc. that each household should have. You will be given lists of what to have on hand for each person in the house, each vehicle and how to store supplies correctly. You will have the means to develop an action plan so no matter where family members might be, you know how to reach each other.

All of this information is for you to gather, for you to manage your household and for you to prepare yourselves in case of emergency.

SONA board members hope that by providing the tools you will be able to make your household and family safer and more prepared. We also hope that you begin talking to your neighbors about how to combine efforts in being prepared for any situation. If, for instance, something happens to your home while you are away at work, can your neighbor contact you? Do you and your family have a plan on who to notify in a disaster, where to meet up and how to find each other? Does your neighbor know this so he or she can help you? Do you have medical needs and if so, do you carry this information with you at all times? Do you have an emergency kit for your cars and home? What should go in it? Does everyone have their own emergency backpack? How do you find out exactly what you need without being overwhelmed by the process?

These binders will be provided free to those who attend meetings. We hope that once you start using them and realizing their value you will help offset the cost of production.

April 2010

Board Elections

Our bylaws state that elections are to be held once a year in April. A proposed slate of officers is listed below. SONA has room for more At-Large board members and would welcome volunteers. In addition, you may add your name to the list and become part of the election process by calling any board member in advance or by stating your desire at the April board meeting. Board members help organize activities and meetings, fund raise and help keep us in touch with each other.

President:	Michael LaRocca
Vice President:	Randi Kinman
Secretary:	Steve Kline
Treasurer:	Marlene Bird
At Large:	Sheila Cvitanich
	Jussi Rajna
	Lisa Steingart

PRESIDENT, Randi Kinman	835.2881	randikinman@yahoo.com
ADMINISTRATIVE VICE PRES, Marlene Bird	288-9727	mbird@cbtnorcal.com
SECRETARY, Steve Kline		slkesq@me.com
TREASURER, Michael LaRocca	564-2374	mlrool1@yahoo.com
BOARD MEMBER, Sheila Cvitanich	292-2690	
BOARD MEMBER, Jussi Rajna	291-0202	
BOARD MEMBER, Lisa Steingart	666-3287	
Website Administrator, Patrick Solmon	287-8795	
Website	www.sona-sj.com	

SONA's newsletter is published monthly and distributed to almost 1500 residences. It is partially funded by a City of San Jose CAP Grant. All ad copy is due by the 15th of each month. Our all-volunteer group welcomes your participation and comments.

SONA Newsletter Editor: Randi Kinman

Census 2010 and the American Community Survey

You should all have received your census packet by now as each household is required at a minimum to fill out the basic 10 questions. The census has been conducted since 1790 and this is where information is gathered that allows us to collect our fair share of revenues for health care, transit, roads, schools and a host of other services. We don't receive if we aren't counted.

The ten basic questions asked are: Who is living in the home as of April 1, 2010 including names, ages, dates of birth, sex and ethnicity. This includes kids at school and those in the hospital or temporarily not in residence. You will be asked the type of housing (house, apartment, etc.) and a phone contact number.

After April 1, 2010, census workers will fan out around the country to knock on doors. If your form was not returned you can count on them showing up and you are required by law to answer census questions. In addition, some households will be contacted by census workers to double check data and ensure accuracy. Census workers will make three attempts to contact you, leaving information behind if you are not there.

With that said, there is concern that people will take advantage of this situation and scam residents into giving out private information. If you are contacted by a census worker, they will not be asking you for income levels, social security numbers or other private information. Do not give out this information to anybody. Census takers:

- Will carry official government ID with their names and may be carrying a "U.S. Census Bureau" bag.
- Will only ask you the 10 questions on the census form.
- Will never ask to enter your house.
- Will never ask you for personal information such as driver's license or social security number.
- Will be able to provide you with the local Regional Census Center phone number to confirm their ID. (425) 908-3000

In addition to the Census, the American Community Survey conducts ongoing updates, sending out a different set of forms that ask more detailed questions, allowing communities to update information quicker than the census. This survey is part of the Census data gathering and is sent out to a limited number of households.

The ACS asks more detailed questions regarding the household, such as marital status, healthcare coverage, income, fuel use, disability status and other information that data gatherers use to determine what each community actually "looks" like. Who lives there, what are the changes, etc. These surveys help communities identify needs and assess trends quicker than a 10-year census. This survey is only conducted via the mail, not door to door and you will never be asked for information (drivers license or social security numbers) that would put your identity at risk. You must fill out this questionnaire, also. If you receive a survey and have doubts about the validity of the questionnaire, you can call (800) 923-8282.

For a complete list of what questions the Census Bureau is asking, for more information or, if you have not received your census form, you can visit the website at www.2010census.gov.

California, the City of San Jose and your school districts depend on this data being gathered accurately. Funds are dispersed based on the data gathered. It has been estimated that California lost billions of dollars because we undercounted our residents. Tracking data (including employment and disability status, mortgage rates, etc.) allows decision makers to pinpoint changes rapidly and adjust accordingly. No matter how you feel about government or bureaucracy, this is your chance to be counted and to receive your fair share.

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City Hall Contact Information

Mayor

Chuck Reed 408.535.4900
 mayormail@sanjoseca.gov

Council District 1

Pete Constant 408.535.4901
 district1@sanjoseca.gov

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All mail can be sent to 200 E. Santa Clara Street, SJ CA 95113

Upcoming Budget Meetings:

April 7 - District 9 7-9pm Cambrian Library

April 8 - District 10 6:30pm Almaden Winery
 Community Center

April 14 - District 4 5:30pm Alviso Branch Library

April 15 - District 4 6:30pm Berryessa Library

April 21 - District 3 6:30pm City Hall room T1734

April 22 - District 5 6:00pm Dr. Roberto Cruz

Alum Rock Library

April 27 - District 1 6:30pm details to be announced

April 29 - District 6 6:30pm details to be announced

Note that meetings have already been held in districts 2, 7 and 9. You can attend any meeting in any district.